



Date: October 4, 2005

To: Workforce Development Board Directors
Youth Program Managers/Lead Contacts

From: Connie Colussy, Director *CColussy*
Bureau of Workforce Programs

Subject: **Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Policy Update 05-06 Literacy and Numeracy Gains**

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy update is to provide guidance on the literacy and numeracy gains measure. In addition, we are providing information about the assessment tools that you must use to assess out-of-school youth, which includes youth with disabilities and English as Second Language participants.

WIA policy update 05-03 - Common Measures Performance Policy was issued June 23, 2005. This policy update builds on the information provided in that policy update specific to literacy and numeracy gains.

Legislative/Regulatory References

- WIA 1998 Federal Rules and Regulations, Subpart D – Youth Program Design, Elements, and parameters, 664.405(a)(1)
- WIA 1998 Public Law 105-220, section 129(c)(1)(A)
- U.S Department of Labor (DOL) Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 18-00: Program Guidance for Implementation of Comprehensive Youth Services under WIA of 1998
- U.S DOL TEGL 28-04: Common Measures Policy
- DWD WIA Policy Update 05-03 – Common Measures Performance Policy Implementation

Background

The United States Department of Labor (DOL) published TEGL 28-04, Common Measures Policy, on April 15, 2005. This TEGL provides information about the literacy and numeracy gains measure as well as the assessment tools required for assessing out-of-school youth.

Proposed Policy

All out-of-school registered youth must be assessed for basic skills, but only those who are basic skills deficient at the time of participation are included in the literacy and numeracy gains measure. Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) are required to use one of the following assessment tools when assessing out-of-school youth. This same assessment tool must be administered to the participant for pre-testing and post-testing.

1. Test of Basic Adult Education (TABE) forms 7 and 8 or 9 and 10,
<http://www.ctb.com>
2. Adult Basic Learning Examination-Second Edition (ABLE),
<http://www.psychcorp.com>
3. Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), or
<http://www.casas.org>
4. Work Keys
<http://www.act.org/workeys>
5. Basic English Skills Test (BEST), or
<http://www.cal.org/best>
6. Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Plus
<http://www.cal.org/bestplus>

Pre-tests administered up to six months prior to participation may be used to establish the baseline for the literacy and numeracy gains measure. If no pre-test was administered before the youth was referred to the WIA youth program, the out-of-school youth must take a pre-test within 60 days following the date of participation.

The post-test must be given within one year from the date of participation. For example, if a youth becomes a participant on June 1, 2005 the post-test must be given on or before May 31, 2006.

Testing Youth with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations must be provided when assessing a youth with a disability. The term disability means, with respect to an individual:

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual;
- A record of such an impairment; or
- Being regarded as having such impairment.

Accommodations for assessing youth with disabilities generally fall into the following categories:

- Changes to the methods of **Presentation** of the test used as the assessment tool, (e.g., providing Braille versions of the test, interpreter, large print, visual clues, repeating directions, or reading aloud.)
- Changes to the methods of **Response** to the test questions: (e.g., having the test taker point to a response, mark answers in book, use reference aids, calculator, tape recorder, word-processor, or computer administration.)
- Changes to the **Setting** in which the test is provided, (e.g., permitting the test to be taken at home, or in small groups; separate room, or special lighting.)
- Changes to the **Timing/Scheduling** of the test, (e.g., permitting frequent breaks, extending the amount of time generally provided for completion of the test, or giving the test over several days.)

In some instances, use of alternate assessment tools, even with appropriate accommodations, may not provide a valid or reliable evaluation of the literacy and numeracy skills of participants with one or more disabilities. When this occurs, WDBs may use an alternate assessment tool to measure literacy and numeracy gains. WDBs must contact the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) prior to using an alternate assessment tool.

Alternate assessments may include, but are not limited to:

- **Portfolio:** Assessment method that uses a collection of the participant's work that demonstrates the skills being assessed.
- **Performance Assessment:** Assessments that are a direct measure of skills and knowledge, usually in a one-on-one assessment.
- **Observation in Structured and Unstructured Setting:** Assessment method to observe whether participants are able to perform certain activities.
- **Samples of Participant Work:** Assessment method used to demonstrate skills being assessed.

Information specific to alternate assessments and measuring progress through the use of these tools can be found on the Department of Public Instruction website:

<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsea/een/eligintro.html>

For additional information about Wisconsin state law, reasonable accommodations, alternate assessments, and transition services pertaining to youth with disabilities, you may contact the following individuals:

- Rick Hall, DWD/Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, (608) 261-0060;
- Sandy Berndt, Department of Public Instruction, (608) 266-1785; or
- Tom Heffron, Technical College System Board, (608) 266-3738.

Automated System Support for Employment and Training (ASSET) Reporting

ASSET was expanded on September 9, 2005 to allow local staff to begin reporting test information that will be needed to compute the All Youth Literacy and Numeracy performance measure. The reporting screens can only be accessed if the case manager reports the customer is an out-of-school, basic skills deficient youth following the administration of the appropriate tests described above. The screens are customized to ensure proper reporting, since the different test types have different reporting methods. This is why the screens refresh each time data is entered in certain fields. It ensures that testing is reported properly and performance outcomes computed correctly.

To report Pre-Test:

1. Manage Assessment, select "Add Test";
2. Select Test Category (ABE or ESL);
3. Pre-Test Overview, select the appropriate Assessment Tool;
4. Select Test Form and Functional Area;
5. Enter pre-test score;
6. Enter Date Administered and Grade Equivalent;
7. Save Record;
8. Report Functional Area 2 and 3 if necessary.

To Report Post-Test Year One and Beyond:

1. Select the appropriate tab;
2. Repeat Steps 2-8 above.

Action Required

The policy is effective immediately.

Questions and/or Technical Assistance and Training

If you have questions about this policy, please contact Scott Fromader at 608 261-4863 or email him at: scott.fromader@dwd.state.wi.us.